

New Web Resource Explores Organizational Integrity

BY ED GIGANTI

CHAUSA, the Catholic Health Association's website (formerly CHA-Online), in December went online with *Organizational Integrity in Catholic Healthcare: The Role of the Leader*, accessible in the Mission Services area. The first of its three parts, "Explore a Catholic World View," provides a "tour" of Catholic tradition as it examines leadership and decision making in the Catholic health ministry. It links scriptural, theological, and poetic references to the beliefs and values that motivate the ministry, as shown in the introduction:

Many people of goodwill share similar perspectives and commitments, whether or not their beliefs are grounded in religious faith. That common ground is possible because the Catholic tradition works from the assumption that the world and people are good, and that when we do what truly fulfills us we find meaning and are happy.

In this example, the world and people are good is a hyperlink, and clicking on this phrase with a computer's mouse displays a scripture reference, Gn 1:12-31. Hyperlinks appear throughout the resource, and some lead to exercises for group or individual reflection. *Organizational Integrity* will also be available in print, but that version will not contain all the hyperlinked references on the Web version.

TOUCHING DEEP BELIEFS

Ann Neale, PhD, CHA's senior associate for ethics and the resource's principal author, said, "We're making a distinction here between organizational *ethics* and organizational *integrity*." Organizational ethics can be limited to recognizing the moral challenges in healthcare management and prioritizing the values at risk, she said. For an organization to have integrity, its leaders must possess deeper beliefs. This resource helps leaders identify the basis for Catholic principles of



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respect for human dignity, stewardship of resources, the common good, and care for the poor. A deeper understanding of tradition influences their behaviors, according to Neale, so that they are leading and acting "from the inside out."

ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Part 1 of *Organizational Integrity* is organized around these critical elements of Catholic health ministry:

- Its foundation is the deep conviction of the goodness in all creation and each person's dignity and sanctity.
- Its focus is the whole person—body, mind, and spirit.
- Persons need to experience nurturing relationships and community.
- The ministry promotes a life-affirming and protective environment.
- All members show a special love and active concern for poor, frail, and vulnerable persons.
- Persons take responsibility for shaping systems, organizations, and public policy to serve the common good.
- Employees find meaning in their work and

have opportunities for personal and professional growth.

- The healing mission has priority over profit.

- Leaders exercise careful stewardship, understanding that health and other resources are precious.

- All members are committed to the mission of being God's radical healing presence in the world.

ORIENTATION, RESEARCH, REFLECTION

Organizational Integrity's many references and discussion and reflection exercises make it a particularly useful resource for mission leaders. It can also provide orientation for new board members or executive leaders, and background for leaders preparing presentations. "It might also be useful during an interview process for senior leaders, giving serious candidates a better understanding of the roots of Catholic healthcare," Neale said. Both individuals and groups can use the material, and Neale hopes it will stimulate personal reflection and discussion among leaders in Catholic healthcare organizations.

A WORK IN PROGRESS

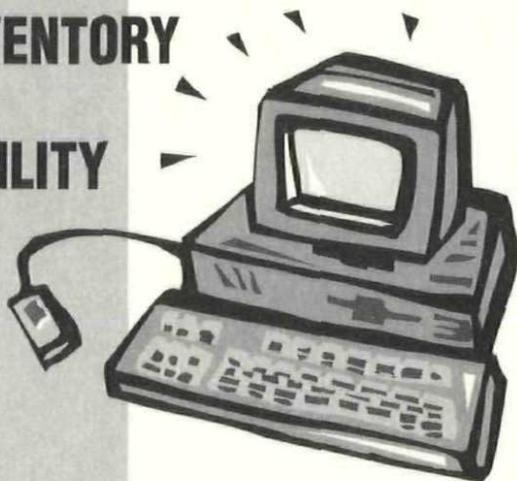
Neale welcomes input from people throughout CHA member organizations, who can enrich this resource by suggesting online links to additional references. Feedback links throughout the resource facilitate suggestions and comments from the online audience. Plans for further development include adding an online discussion area.

Part 2 of *Organizational Integrity*, "Do You Resonate With It?," will provide a bridge from the world view to issues confronting Catholic healthcare. "Part 2 will be more explicit about the behavioral implications of what we believe," Neale said. "Our faith is only fully expressed when we act out of it."

The last part of the resource will discuss specific issues, "what people traditionally think of as organizational ethics," Neale said. □

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